DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 221 022 FL 013 106

TITLE Sounds of Language.
INSTITUTION Chicago Board of Education, Ill. Dept. of Curriculum.
PUB DATE 80
NOTE 54p.

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC03 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Elementary Secondary Education; *Introductory Courses; Language; Language Aptitude; *Listening Skills; Modern Language Curriculum; *Second Language Instruction; *Second Language Programs; Second Languages; *Speech Skills; Study Habits

ABSTRACT

"Sounds of Language" is a background course to provide elementary and secondary school students with a greater understanding of how language works. The course is designed to (1) introduce students to the variations of sounds and structure of many foreign languages, (2) teach study habits that are vital to successful foreign language learning, and (3) develop an understanding of the dynamics of language. Various plans for implementing the course, both at the elementary and at the high school level, are outlined. The goals of the course and student objectives with regard to sounds and language skills are described and a sample unit is given. Teacher resource information, activities for vocabulary reinforcement, special activities to augment the course, suggested field trips, and a student course evaluation form are appended. A bibliography and teacher evaluation sheet are also included. (EKN)

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SOUNDS OF LANGUAGE

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RATIONALE

The acquisition of a foreign language is an experience that requires such techniques as ear training and a reorientation from the written to the oral word: verbal mimicking of sounds; repetition and memorization; and the particular study habits involved in the learning process.

Foreign language learning creates an awareness, an understanding, and an appreciation of other cultures, helping to erase prejudices and creating an acceptance of all peoples and an awareness of the importance of the communication process.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Sounds of Language is designed as a background course to provide students with a greater understanding of how language works. It introduces students to the variations of sounds and structure of many foreign languages so that their ears become quickly attuned to recognizing "strange" sounds. This process enables them to repeat these sounds. The course is designed to teach study habits that are vital to successful foreign language learning and to develop an understanding of the dynamics of language. The students can then enter a formalized foreign language study with positive mental attitudes, having already mastered the techniques involved in the acquisition of a second language.

The Sounds of Language course is designed to meet the needs of the following:

- The student who has not been permitted to enroll in foreign language classes because of low scores in standardized reading and language tests in English.
- The freshman student who has not yet made a valid language choice. In this course, the student is introduced to mini units in several languages before selecting a foreign language sequence.
- The early involvement student from the elementary school, who is introduced to mini units in several languages

before deciding upon a language elective.

- The student who has been unsuccessful in completing the year's program in a given language, but can continue the second semester in the foreign language program with this course.

- The student who has completed two or three years of foreign language study and wishes to enrich his or her language background by exposure to two or three additional languages.

PROGRAMMING

Semester and Annual Plans for High School

Sounds of Language is designed both as a two-semester, non-sequential curriculum offering and as a single semester course for the high school.

Plan I (High School)

For a two-semester plan, the following outline is suggested. It may be altered to the individual needs of the school and for the number of languages offered.

First Semester

I. Introduction to the history, dynamics, and distribution of language (Duration: 3 weeks)

II. Introductory units in two languages in eight-week minicourses (Duration: 16 weeks)

III. Recapitulation and review (Duration: 1 week)

Second Semester

I. New topics in the history, dynamics, and distribution of language (Duration: 2 weeks)

II. Introductory units in two (new) languages in eight-week minicourses (Duration: 16 weeks)

III. Recapitulation and review (Duration: 1 week)

Plan II (High School)

The option to offer Sounds of Language as a single-semester course, reducing the minicourses for languages to four-or five-week segments may be considered. The following might serve as a model.

I. Introduction to the history, dynamics, and distribution of language (Duration: 4 weeks)

II. Minicourses in three languages (Duration: 15 weeks)

III. Recapitulation and review (Duration: 1 week)

Annual Plan for Elementary School

Plan III (Elementary School)

For the elementary school, the annual course can be divided into six segments for the 39-week school year.

I. Introduction to the history, dynamics, and distribution of language (Duration: 5 weeks)

II. Introductory units in four languages in eight-week courses (Duration: 32 weeks)

III. Recapitulation, review, and evaluation--the further examination of likenesses and differences in the target languages studied (Duration: 2 weeks)

Plan IIIB (Elementary School)

The annual course can be divided into three or four segments for the 39-week school year. The number of segments will depend upon the number of foreign languages offered in the school.

I. Introduction to the history of languages (May be covered by the social studies or English language arts teacher. A good resource is the student's language arts text.)

II. Introductory units in each of the languages offered within the school

(It is recommended that the classes be programmed at the same time in order that the students will be able to move on to the next language at the end of a ten-week period without any problems in programming.)

III. Selection by the student of the one language in which he/she feels most at ease and which he/she wishes to use as a major. (The student returns to this group for the remainder of the year.)

TEAM TEACHING AND SPECIAL TEACHER-PROGRAMMING CONSIDERATIONS

To provide the optimal language learning, the Sounds of Language course was planned as a team-teaching effort. Since it would be an unusual circumstance for one teacher to be proficient in three or four foreign languages, it would be advisable to pair teachers with diverse languages for this class. Sounds of Language classes may be offered in the high school in a "back-to-back" programming arrangement or by programming the classes to alternate in the professional preparation time slot of the teacher involved. In this way, the pairs of teachers would, at the midyear, exchange original class period and professional preparation periods for the second semester. The introductory section of the course may be taught by any foreign language teacher.

Where optimal language learning and programming conditions are not available, it may be possible for a language teacher to offer mini units in several languages through creative use of tape recordings and other available audiovisual and instruction materials. Community resource persons with second language skills, working under the direction of the foreign language teacher, might also be utilized in the implementation of the course.

GOALS

- To develop an understanding of the dynamics of language
- To develop an awareness of the number of languages in the world
- To introduce the student to several minicourses in the foreign languages which are either currently offered

in the individual school or for which resource persons and/or materials might be utilized.

- To develop the concepts of culture and communication
- To develop an awareness, understanding, and an appreciation of other cultures as well as of his/her own, with special emphasis on the cultures of the target languages being studied.
- To enhance the ability, via cultural and language enrichment, to relate to and interact well with people of diverse cultural backgrounds
- To develop an awareness of the changing world and the concept that language reflects change
- To develop an understanding of language as it reflects the importance of concepts in a given culture
- To develop appreciation of the importance of langauge as an essential communicative skill
- To develop the ability to discern, wherever possible, the similarities and differences in the target languages and to compare form and structure of language
- To develop the student's recognition and use of cognates and root words
- To help the student learn to listen, to recognize, and to appreciate the sounds of languages other than English
- To develop the skills necessary for effective foreign language study
- To develop correct study habits for learning a new language
- To prepare the student to be a better world citizen

STUDENT OBJECTIVES: SOUNDS

Objectives

- To learn tools of language
- To develop the positive attitude that language learning is fun
- To increase vocabulary of the English (mother) language
- To realize relationships between words and their meanings

Activities

- Students select a word of their choice to look up in the dictionary for the four aspects of the word presented: part of speech, spelling, pronunciation, and meaning. Students then select one of the words in the meaning aspect to look up for its four aspects. Students keep a list of the words and meanings, and try to ultimately return to the original word.

  Example

  information: knowledge derived from reading, observation, or instruction

  knowledge: the sum of information conserved by civilization

  It becomes fun for the students to try to select the words from the definition that may lead them back to the original word. A variation on this activity is for students to make a wheel of any of the words they use whose definitions lead back to the original source.

- Students use the thesaurus to find synonyms and keep a chart of all the words they find.

  A variation of this activity is for students to use the thesaurus to find the synonym of a selected word and then to use the dictionary to look up the meaning of the synonym.

- Students are divided into small groups, and each group receives a prefix and a suffix in order to complete several tasks:

Find words containing prefixes and write them in list form.

Find words containing suffixes and write them in list form.

Find the meaning of the above words in the dictionary and add the meaning to the initial lists.

Find synonyms of the above words in the thesaurus and add the synonym to the initial lists.

Play a game within each group in which either the definition or synonym is provided and the other students guess the word.

. Peer teaching is an adjunct to the preceding activity. There are several approaches to expedite the process of bringing the smaller groups together to the entire class so that all of the class is able to benefit from the learning of the individual groups. In each of the following approaches, the groups select a leader to teach ten words to the entire class.

The leader writes on the chalkboard one of the words, which the rest of the class copies on a sheet of paper. Each student looks up the word in the dictionary and in the thesaurus and copies both definition and synonym. (This approach assumes that each student has a dictionary and thesaurus.)

or

The leader provides the meaning and synonym of the word, which each student copies.

or

The students in the class provide a definition and synonym of the word based on any experience with the word that they may have had.

- Students play "Password." The class is divided into two groups, with a captain who provides definitions, synonyms, suffixes, and prefixes that the group has chosen to use. The other team tries to guess the word of the definitions or synonyms, for which it receives a point. The group tries to select words that are difficult enough to stump the other team. An easier version is for the captain to provide prefixes and suffixes for which the other team must think of a word containing the prefix or suffix given in order to receive a point. The team with the most points wins the game.

  An added incentive to spark interest in this game is for the teacher to give to each student of the winning team some token prize, star, or other positive reinforcement for a game well played.

Evaluation

A test, either oral or written, evaluates the following:

The student's ability to use the dictionary and the thesaurus efficiently

The student's knowledge of certain vocabulary words that have been learned in the class

The student's knowledge of the meanings of prefixes and suffixes

The student's ability to guess meanings of more difficult words based on the prefixes and suffixes contained in them.

Suggestion: This evaluation is more effective when made in several short quizzes.

Objectives

- To learn the importance of language for communication
  - Efficiency of verbal communication
  - Effect of language communication on emotions
- To develop in the student a broad definition of language and its many forms
- To acquaint the student with a variety of nonlinguistic systems of communication, many of which are part of daily life

Activities

- Students are divided into small groups. In the first task, the "lead" student receives a sentence which must be communicated to the rest of the group without the use of language (time limit of five minutes). The lead student then receives a sentence which he or she verbally communicates to the rest of the group.

  When this activity is completed, students explain the difference between the first and second task, how the use of verbal language facilitates the second task, and the feelings involved in each task for both the lead student and the rest of the group.

Evaluation

Students should realize that they feel frustrated with the first task of the above activity and that the use of verbal language enhances feelings of tranquillity and peace as well as efficiency of communication.

The activity is repeated until this realization occurs.

Objectives

- To develop an awareness of sounds of language as they relate to accent
- To make students cognizant of borrowed words in the English language whose pronunciation may or may not be changed

Activities

- Sounds are one of the components of accent. In this activity, which develops an awareness of the concept of accent, students listen to both British and American native speakers (via tape if speakers are not available to visit the class). The students then listen to varying British accents and varying American accents. Unless the American students' ears have been previously trained to recognize the variation in British accents, they probably will not realize any differences. Ask the students the following questions at the appropriate time in the activity:

  Can you hear the difference between the British and American accents?

  Can you hear the differences in the various American accents (regional or ethnic)?

  Can you hear the differences in the various British accents?

- Students listen to various foreign accents in English from a tape recorder, film, or other audiolingual equipment. After listening to the accent, students mimic the foreign accented English words. After successfully imitating the word, students try to imitate phrases and then entire English sentences that are changed by foreign accents. Students should be exposed to different foreign accents and should have the experience of trying to imitate them, e.g., Spanish, French, German, Chinese, Hebrew.

- Make a list of foreign-sounding words in the English language, i.e., foreign words whose pronunciation does not seem to be drastically altered in English:

  bon voyage
  amor.

- Make a list of words that are adopted into English from other languages. (This activity is similar to the previous activity except that the pronunciation may have been changed to adapt to the ears of English-speaking persons.

Spanish	German	French
poncho	frankfurter	garage
siesta	kindergarten	mini
fritos	volkswagen	ballet
adios	auf wiedersehen	fondue

. Make a list of towns and cities with foreign names.

Evaluation

The evaluation of the student's ability to recognize and reproduce foreign accents can be divided into two parts.

Students listen to a tape of a person speaking his/her native foreign language in several segments: a paragraph in the natural rhythm of the language; a sentence in the natural rhythm of the language; a phrase in the natural rhythm of the language; a word; a sound.

After listening to the native speaker, the student repeats a sound, a word, a phrase, and a sentence of the foreign language. The evaluation is made on the basis of the degree to which the student is able to imitate the accent in the foreign language.

Objectives

- To develop an awareness of nonlinguistic systems of communication as contrasted to the sound system of language

Activities

- Instruct the class that you are going to tell a story in pantomime and that you will be unable to give any verbal clues for your story. Create a series of gestures and movements and sustain the activity for several minutes. Repeat the pantomime several times, if necessary, and then ask the class to record or discuss the meaning of the story. Student reaction will range from amusement to confusion to frustration as it becomes apparent that the class will be unable to agree upon the "meaning" of the story.

- A discussion should emerge which asks questions such as the following: Did I communicate with you in my story? Why not? What went wrong? Must I speak to communicate? What about deaf-mutes who communicate with gestures? Is gesturing a language? Ultimately, the provocative question, "What is language?" should be asked, and a discussion of its broad definition should follow.

  The above activity leads into a consideration of the forms language takes, according to the agreed-upon definition.

- Bring in examples of nonlinguistic systems of communication for discussion and illustration.

  - Rules of the Road (Published by the State of Illinois, Office of the Secretary of State)

  - A copy of the international traffic symbols

  - A copy of the Morse Code

  - A copy of the International Boy Scout hand signals.

- Have groups of students develop a nonlinguistic system of communication fashioned, for example, after the knotted ropes or bead language of various Indian tribes. Reinforcing the definition of language, the group must

agree upon the meaning of symbols used in order to create their "language."

- Invite a guest speaker from the aviation industry, specifically from air traffic control, to give a talk and demonstration of the complex system of audio and visual devices used to control air traffic.
- Have a discussion and/or research project on various forms of animal language and how it differs from human language.
- Have a student who is familiar with one of the modes of communication of the deaf-mute give a meaningful class demonstration.

Objective

- To develop an awareness of the many systems of writing

Activities

- Visit the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago to view the exhibit of cuneiform or the Field Museum to see the large collection of stone carvings and written records of ancient civilizations. (A guided tour at the Field Museum can be arranged through the Education Department of the Museum.)

- Have students create original ideographs and share them with the class. This can be a very creative endeavor for the students. The work can be displayed in an artistic chart.

- A student, teacher, or resource person from the community may demonstrate and/or teach segments of an alphabet, such as Chinese, Greek, Arabic, or Hebrew. Seeing and attempting to write a totally new alphabet is an exciting project.

- Have students write such words as peace or love in a variety of languages, stressing here a variety of alphabets.

- Show the French film L'Enfant Sauvage, which depicts the story of a boy who grew up among wolves. The attempts to teach him human language are illustrative of the language process. (Consult the International Film Bureau for availability and distribution of film.)

- An autobiography, biography, film, or play based on the life of Helen Keller is a compelling adventure of the famed deaf-mute's struggle with language and communication. Have the students learn about Helen Keller; her life will give them insight into the importance of language.

Objective

- To develop an awareness of the language of the world and language families

Activities

- Ask students to list all the foreign languages they can think of and the countries where the languages are spoken as a principal language. Have the students guess the number of languages spoken in the world today. Keep the papers and, at the conclusion of this unit, repeat the activities and compare both lists.

- Encourage students to develop displays and projects which illustrate the geographic distributions of various languages throughout the world. A map of world languages or a "tree" of language families can be an attractive and stimulating project.

- Start a class language scrapbook and ask students to clip newspaper and magazine articles which discuss language topics. Be especially alert to the African and Far Eastern tongues which are normally not familiar to the student. This activity will reinforce the students' acquaintance with languages outside the Indo-European branch.

- Survey the student body or several classes to determine how many languages are spoken at the school and how many ethnic groups are represented. (The school administration may be able to provide some statistics for this project.) Classify the languages into families and prepare a chart or display of this data.

STUDENT OBJECTIVES: LANGUAGE SKILLS

Objectives

- To learn to distinguish differences in sounds of language
- To reproduce the sounds of the target language with the use of exercises and games
- To recognize foreign words that are adapted into English
- To recognize similarities and differences in the target languages in form and structure
- To sharpen the listening skills, training the ear in order to develop the ability to recognize and verbally imitate the sounds of languages other than English
- To sharpen the skills of reading and grammar

Activities

- Students read English words for minute differences in sound that change meaning. For example--

  bat - but - bet
  pet - put - pit - pig

- Use a tape recorder and develop an activity in which students listen and then repeat.

  Students first hear a "strange" sound.

  Students then hear the word that contains this sound.

  Students then hear a sentence that emphasizes the sound. Students practice until they are able to repeat complete sentences of "strange" sounds without difficulty.

  Students practice into a tape recorder which is played back to them. They have the opportunity to hear the difference between the model and their imitation.

- Students learn that an animated, verbalized gesture is represented by different sounds in different languages. For example, the different sounds that represent a sneeze follow:

English - atchoo	French - atchoum
Spanish - atchis	German - hatschi
Polish - apcich	Italian - ee-ciu
	Japanese - kushan

Students imitate the sounds in different languages of selected verbalized gestures.

A variation on this activity is to have motivated students find the sounds in different languages of other selected verbalized gestures; for example, to find out how a dog barks in Swahili or how a drum roll sounds in Serbo-Croatian.

- Students make a correspondence between a sound and a written letter.

The teacher provides a chart of sounds on which the students circle the correct written letter of the sound they hear.

After successfully completing this activity, the students perform a more complicated exercise in which they hear the sound and then write down the letter that they think corresponds to the sound.

Students listen to numerous sounds of a particular language and then make a list of the sounds of the target language not familiar in the native language. If this task is too difficult, the teacher can give a chart to the students that contains all of the written correspondents of the sounds heard and ask the students to circle the letter correspondent of the sound.

Evaluation

The following tests may be used to evaluate the students' ability to distinguish differences in sounds of languages.

Students listen to two sounds to determine if they are the same or different.

Students hear a sound and select a written correspondent from two possibilities on their paper.

Students hear a sound and repeat it as accurately as possible into a cassette or tape recorder. Evaluation is made on a scale of 1, 2, 3 (1= a nearly perfect imitation; 2= somewhat similar; 3= no similarity).

Students listen to sounds in different languages of selected verbalized gestures, which they repeat as accurately as possible. Evaluation is made on the same scale as in the test above.

Students produce the sound that is suggested by a written correspondent--only sounds with which they have become familiar in the activities.

Objectives

- To develop an awareness that spoken words reflect differences in emotion, culture, socioeconomic status, and meaning, e.g., slang

- To develop an awareness of the syntactical relationship of words to the sentence

Activities

- This is an activity to develop a sense of word order. Begin with three nonsense words, e.g., prans, sprans, splans. Write a series of sentences with the new words--

  The prans spran the splans.
  The splans were spranning the prans.
  Prans the sprans and splans!
  The pranned splans were spranning.

  Ask questions about the nonsense sentences to ascertain if students recognize the function of the various invented words--

  Which word is the verb? subject? object?
  What's happening in the sentence?

  After students successfully answer these questions with several examples, have students invent three nonsense syllables of their own and write five sentences using various forms of their new words. This activity can be repeated several times, with students using new words each time.

  Teachers collect the students' sentences, some of which are later used for the purpose of evaluation.

  As an adjunct to the preceding activity, students play a game. Prior to the game, students make up ten sentences consisting of nonsense words.

  The class divides into two teams.

  One of the team members reads any of the sentences aloud. In order to score a point, a member of the opposing team must correctly identify the verb in the sentence.

The game remains interesting by a simple change in the part of speech that must be identified.

What is the subject of the sentence?
What is the object of the sentence?
Are there any adjectives?

This activity achieves several purposes:

Students learn to accept the idea of strange words when they make up their own.

When students read their sentences comprised of nonsense words, they begin to feel what it is like to speak a foreign language.

When students listen to the strange sentences, they begin to feel what it is like to listen intensely to a foreign language in order to grasp it.

- The teacher reads or plays a tape of sentences in different languages. The students listen intently and try to pick out the subject or the verb. The students should listen to several sentences in the same language in order to grasp the pattern of that language.

- In order for the students to understand the significance of slang, the following two activities are suggested:

Make three columns of words as follows:

- new words added to the English language
- words whose meanings have changed
- words taken from other languages.

Write a slang dictionary with two meanings of each slang word selected: the standard meaning of the word and the changed meaning in its use as a slang word.

. This activity develops an awareness that language reflects differences in socioeconomic status.

Students speak the part of selected character types to convey a particular message.

Students select a character type from a given list:

teacher	president of the U.S.
doctor	mother
truck driver	babysitter

The teacher suggests the idea to be conveyed:

How would each of the above express the idea that he/she wants to go to a party on Saturday?

How would each of the above express the idea that the price of gasoline is very expensive?

How would each of the above express the idea that it is important for you to pass all of your subjects in school with good grades?

Students should have the opportunity to convey the same message, using at least two different character types.

Evaluation

Students read a sentence and decide whether it contains a slang expression. They respond by writing yes or no; i.e., that it does or does not contain slang expressions.

Hang on the telephone for a moment. yes

Tell the gentleman that I want to see him. no

Students read a sentence and decide which of two persons would be more likely to make a statement:

I'm going to hang on the telephone for a moment.

a. president b. teenager

Send the gentleman in, please.

a. truck driver b. supervisor

Evaluation of these tests is made on a point system, assigning a certain number of points for each correct answer.

SAMPLE UNIT ADAPTABLE TO THE TEACHING OF ANY FOREIGN LANGAUGE

SAMPLE UNIT

Suggested time for teaching this sample unit is ten weeks. The material is designed for students in years 3-12, and is easily adjusted to the maturity level of the students. In schools that offer more than one foreign language, the students can be exposed to three different languages during three 10-week minicourses so that they have the opportunity to learn the sounds and intonations of more than one language and are ultimately able to decide which language they would like to study further.

NOTE: The Sounds of Language can be offered during the first quarter, followed by the introduction of three different languages in each of the remaining three quarters of the school year.

Objectives

- To begin an understanding of the target language sound system
- To increase vocabulary in the target language
- To develop an interest and understanding of the people of the target language

Suggested Activities

The oral-aural techniques and the overhead projector, or a picture workbook facilitate this activity, make it more interesting to the students, and increase mastery.

- Teach the students vocabulary that covers the following areas:

greetings	numbers from 1 to 100
colors	furniture in classroom, in house
days of week	members of family
months of year	clothing
parts of human body	

brief dialogs using certain word forms which are necessary to form sentences (to be, this is, who is, where is).

- Have students act out brief dialogs using learned vocabulary.

- Involve students in creative projects such as the following:

  Make a zoo mural labeling all animals and other objects in the mural in the target language (balloon man, ice cream vendor, grass, sidewalk, sky, sun, clouds, birds).

  Take a field trip to the zoo as follow-up of the previous project.

  Cook ethnic foods in the classroom and provide the recipes for the students. Teach the vocabulary for the following words: flour, milk, sugar, salt, eggs, butter, pan, stove, table, plate, knife, spoon, cloth, napkin.

  Take a field trip to an ethnic restaurant.

Study cultural life, patterns of behavior, national customs, and observances of the countries represented by the target language.

  Use films and filmstrips that teach the geography and national customs of the countries.

  Introduce students to artists by taking a field trip to the Chicago Art Institute, by having students do research papers on the subject of art, or by using slides on the art of the countries of the target language.

  Use available workbooks which emphasize cultural differences.

  Invite representatives from the countries of the target language to make students aware of history, customs, and cultural differences in various parts of the world.

Evaluation

The teacher who uses the picture workbook will be able to give regular quizzes based on oral teacher presentation in the target language of descriptions (true or false) of pictures which the student will mark + or - (true or false).

Wall charts of colors allow the teacher to hear the students' recitation of the colors indicated when pointed out.

Mathematical problems and multiple counting determine a knowledge of numbers. Counting around the room and eliminating those who cannot recall the correct number is a challenge.

Using word Bingo for a test of specific words and having pictures of the words, students can make their own Bingo boards and place pictures wherever they wish in order to make the game a challenge.

Word-downs with a picture are familiar to students and eliminate the need for English.

APPENDIX

- Teacher Resource Information
- Activities for Vocabulary Reinforcement
- Special Activities To Augment the Course
- Suggested Field Trips
- Student Evaluation

TEACHER RESOURCE INFORMATION

Language--History, Evolution, and Dynamics

What is language? How did it originate? How does it change? Why do some languages die? Can man create a workable international language? How many languages are spoken in the world today? How are they related? Where are they spoken? How did the English language evolve? Is there an "easy" language? a difficult language? What is the best way to study a foreign language?

A myriad of questions on the nature and dynamics of language suggest a need for an in-depth study of this topic as a preliminary step to the selection and study of foreign languages. The introductory segment of the Sounds of Language guide addresses itself to these and other related aspects.

The following outline suggests some of these topics.

I. Definition of language as the transfer of mutually agreed upon meaning from the mind of one individual to that of another

II. Forms of language: oral, gestural, symbolic, pictorial, written

III. Nonlinguistic systems of communication

    A. Symbolic language which uses auditory and visual devices

        1. Traffic signals

        2. Tom-toms of Africa

        3. Morse Code

        4. Whistling language (used by natives of Gomera in the Canary Islands and natives of Kusnoy in Turkey)

        5. Imitating of animal and bird sounds to convey messages

        6. U.S. Army bugle calls - 40 distinct calls

7. Audiovisual devices to monitor air traffic for private as well as commercial planes

B. Pictorial forms of communication

1. Knotted ropes and notched stick language of the ancient Chinese, South American Indians, West African, and Australian natives

2. Quipu ("knots") of the Peruvian Incas (Quipu used both knots and colors; "quipucamayocuna" or "keeper of the knots" are official interpreters of this system.)

3. Codes of medieval heraldry (whole stories are told on a coat-of-arms).

C. Gestural forms of communication

It is estimated that gestural forms of language preceded speech by as much as one million years in man's development. It is also estimated that seven hundred thousand gestures can be produced facially by postural movements: movements of the arms, legs, hands, and combinations thereof.

1. Gestural language of deaf-mutes (Three hundred thousand meanings can be expressed.)

2. Indian sign language

3. International Boy Scout adaptation of Indian sign language

4. Dancing language of Japan, China, Korean, and Indochina, with its approximately 200 gestures to express various phases of love

5. Use of gestures by the peoples of all nations to enrich the spoken form of communication

a. Nodding the head to signify yes
b. Thumbs down to signify a negative response
c. Winking to catch a young lady's attention
d. Forming a V with the index and middle finger to signify victory and, more recently, peace.

(It should be pointed out that gestures are not universal, but have varying meanings in different cultures, some of which are insulting.)

IV. Written communication

It is estimated that tens of thousands of years elapsed between the beginning of society and the first appearance of writing. Writing, unlike other forms of communications such as speech, gestures, or symbols, has greater permanence and can be understood from era to era. Writing started with the drawing of pictures. Cave drawings in France, Spain, and North Africa are estimated to have been created forty or fifty thousand years ago.

A. Origin of written language

Many early societies felt that writing, like speech, was of divine origin. Examples of this theory are found in the following:

1. Devanagari (Sanskrit alphabet) means "pertaining to the city of the gods."

2. Hieroglyphic writing used by the early Egyptians means "sacred stone writing."

3. Cuneiform (The ancient Assyrians felt the god Nebo gave this form of writing to man.)

B. Ancient languages

1. The oldest records available were written in Sumerian. It was a language spoken in the Mesopotamian Valley between 3100 B.C. and 2000 B.C., when it became extinct.

2. Egypt and China have written records which go back to 2000 BC.

3. The oldest record available in Latin dates from c. 500 B.C.

C. Two main systems of writing evolved.

1. Picto-ideographic (a blending of the early pictographs which were primarily drawings of concrete objects and the later ideographs, which were drawings of ideas and abstractions, such as friendship, justice, virtue, and loyalty)

The Sumerians, Egyptians, and Chinese are credited with the first purely pictographic system of writing. Various American Indian and Australian natives have developed similar systems.

2. Phonetic (a system of writing developed by the early Hebrews and Phoenicians which linked drawn symbols to sounds of the spoken tongue rather than to ideas)

a. The first phonetic alphabet contained 22 letters.
b. The first Hebrew-Phoenician alphabet spread to the Greeks and Romans, who added to the number of letters.
c. Most western languages use the Roman alphabet with special changes.

. Accent marks in French over the same letter

é è ê

- Tilde over the n (ñ) in Spanish
- Umlaut over a, o, u (ä, ö, ü,) in German
- Special combinations of letters in various languages (szcz in Polish)

d. Languages may be written from left to right as in most Western languages, right to left as in Hebrew and Arabic, top to bottom as in Japanese and Chinese.

e. The Cyrillic alphabet used by some Slavic nations is basically a variant of the Greek alphabet.

f. In addition to the Arab nations, other nations, as listed below, use the Arabic alphabet:

- Fula, Hausa, Swahili in Africa
- Java, Sudan, Malay
- Moro people in the Philippines
- Urdu and Punjabi in India

Because of the many similarities in structure, vocabulary, sound, and development which a given language might share with other languages, linguists have been able to group the world's tongues in "language families." Although the number might vary depending on differing schools of thought, as many as 15 language families have been classified. Seven of the major language families and some of the languages in each group are charted below:

Indo-European		
English	Hindi	Russian
French	Italian	Spanish
German	Portuguese	Urdu
Sino-Tibetan		
Burmese	Chinese	Thai
African:		
Northern or Sudanic		
Fala	Fon	Mandingo

(continued)

Southern or Bantu		
Swahili	Xhosa	Zulu
Japanese		
Ural-Altaic		
Finnish	Hungarian Manchuria	Turkish
Malayo-Polynesian		
Fiji	Malay Tagalog	Tahitian

It is impossible to state with certainty the number of languages spoken in the world today. It is generally agreed that there are approximately 3,000 languages; however, some linguists estimate as many as 5,000 languages. The discrepancy in this number may be attributed to the difficulties inherent in determining the point at which a dialect fully evolves into a separate language. The estimated 3,000 languages are spoken by three and a half billion people, equal to the world's population as of 1971.

Six of the approximately 3,000 languages are spoken by the majority of the world's population and have over 100 million native speakers each. These languages are Chinese, English, German, Hindi-Urdu, Russian, and Spanish. In contrast, many languages are spoken by fewer than 1,000 speakers.

Based primarily on West's The Way of Language[1], the following chart represents the world's leading languages, the number of speakers in millions, and the chief countries in which they are the principal language.

Language	Number of Speakers (in millions)	Chief Countries/Areas
Mandarin	515	China
English	265	U.S.A., United Kingdom, Australia, New Zealand, some nations of Africa
Hindi-Urdu	185	India, Pakistan,
Spanish	145	Latin America, Spain

1 Fred West, The Way of Language (New York: Harcourt-Brace-Jovanovich, 1979).

Language	Number of Speakers (in millions)	Chief Countries/Areas
Russian	135	USSR
German	100	Germany, Austria, Switzerland
Japanese	95	Japan
Arabic	90	Middle East, North Africa
Bengali	85	Pakistan, India
Portuguese	85	Portugal, Brazil
French	65	France, Canada, Haiti, parts of Switzerland and Belgium, some nations of Africa
Cantonese	55	China
Italian	55	Italy
WU	55	China
Fukienese	50	China, Taiwan

The language with the fewest speakers is Andamanese (Andaman Islands of India) with a total of 400 speakers.

Sample units on the history, dynamics, evolution, and geography of language can be incorporated into the Sounds of Language course to stimulate the many possible topics of study in this area. The teacher may develop units on several of the following topics:

History of place names
History of personal and family names
Language and psychology
Language and religion
The origin and growth of a specific language (Particularly germane would be the development of the English language or individual units on the language of each student's ethnic origin.)
Semantics, the study of the meanings of words and their changes
Slang
Dialects
"Easy" vs "difficult" languages
Universal languages (Interlingua, Esperanto, Interglossa, Volapuk)
Language and Education
How a baby learns language
Language, society, and culture
Black English.

ACTIVITIES FOR

VOCABULARY REINFORCEMENT

Foreign language students often do not understand what study habits they need in order to learn a language. The length of time needed for each student may differ. The teacher can help students to facilitate the learning process with some simple techniques. For example, the teacher should make sure that students understand the meaning of the basic dialog and supplementary vocabulary before they begin memorization. In addition, the teacher may use picture cards that correlate with the dialog. This technique helps students to associate new vocabulary with these visual aids an and helps them memorize the materials more quickly.

Have the students--

- learn the dialog by heart. Tapes and records help to correct pronunciation and to reinforce vocabulary. Students should listen to tapes and records no more than 20 minutes at a time.

- write the new words several times and then write each new word in a sentence in the target language.

- write unfamiliar words on 3x5 inch cards that they can use for personal drill (foreign word on one side and English word on the other). Students can add continuously to these words and eliminate those words that they have mastered.

- use their new vocabulary to create skits that they can act out or to write short stories. Using the videotape is an added incentive.

- see the relationships of foreign words to other words in the foreign language and in English.

- design bulletin boards in the classroom that visualize certain vocabulary in colorful ways: color wheels with the colors labeled; skeleton or stick figure with labels on the parts of the body.

- use flash cards in small groups or individually.
- play games that reinforce current vocabulary, such as word Bingo, spelldowns, and worddowns.
- create alphabetical picture dictionaries using either their own drawings or cutout pictures from magazines for illustrations.
- work through mathematical problems, oral and individual counting, using cardinal and ordinal numbers. They can use a clock face to tell time.
- make charts of certain words, such as adjectives, to show written changes between masculine, feminine, singular, and plural.
- group words into antonyms and synonyms.
- drill vacabulary that has unusual changes in form. This exercise develops fluency and understanding of orthographical rules.
- use a foreign language dictionary and an all-foreign language dictionary in advanced levels in order to increase vocabulary.
- use the target language in classroom conversation and directions.
- learn proverbs, poems, songs, and skits which introduce new vocabulary. By using these devices, the students learn vocabulary automatically.
- Participate in a 10-minute period during class for total immersion in the language. On certain days, have students speak only in foreign languages in halls and the lunchroom. If the teacher eats with the students, create a language table.

SPECIAL ACTIVITIES TO AUGMENT THE COURSE

The Sounds of Language course, because of its multilingual, multiethnic character, can incorporate a greater number and variety of activities in its curriculum than can a standard language class. Many of the following suggested field trips and activities have been tested and have proved successful in such a class; others have had great success in the Foreign Language Dayhouse programs. The class teacher is encouraged to draw upon past teaching experiences and successes for additional activities.

- Organize an International Club in conjunction with the Sounds of Language class. Encourage membership from the diverse student body-at-large.

- Organize an International Night which can be sponsored in conjunction with the Local School Council, the P.T.A., and/or interested community organizations. Parents can contribute ethnic foods for a large international buffet. Dancing, music, decorations, and native costumes create a truly festive atmosphere.

- Organize an International Film Festival either during school hours or for several consecutive evenings. Announcements should be made to the community.

- Organize an International Folk Dancing class. Have students serve as the instructors for this activity.

- Invite guest speakers, both native and nonnative, from the student body and the community-at-large to address the class. Encourage the use of films or photos whenever possible.

- Celebrate holidays typical of the cultures of the target languages being studied (Bastille Day, Fasching, Oktoberfest, Mardi Gras, Mexican Independence Day).

- Teach songs for each of the target languages studied. Singing seasonal songs in the various languages has been traditional at many schools.

- Encourage a program for Pen Pals.

- Decorate the room with arts and crafts which reflect the multiethnic character of the course.

- Include for each language segment a section on ethnic food and customs dealing with family meals. Have students prepare and serve ethnic delicacies for the class. Write and collect recipes for the foods that have been prepared in order to enrich the students' vocabulary.

- Play games such as Monopoly, Bingo, Scrabble, Buzz, and Who Am I. Particularly successful is Bingo, played initially as each target language is being studied, and, ultimately, "mixed Bingo," which can be a multilingual brain teaser as the students master numbers in three or four languages.

- Sponsor an ethnic meal in conjunction with the school lunchroom. Have students decorate the lunchroom appropriately, act as hosts and hostesses, and provide music and entertainment.

SUGGESTED FIELD TRIPS

The Chicago metropolitan area provides a wealth of cultural/ethnic opportunities and places for exciting and productive field trips for the Sounds of Language class. A small number of the vast possibilities that exist in this area are listed below:

- Visit the International Folk Festival at Navy Pier which is held annually during the last weekend in October.
- Contact the colleges and universities in the area which frequently plan special language activities for high school groups.
- Plan a guided tour to the Art Institute on French, German, Spanish, Italian, and African art. Because of the great demand for this activity, appointments for the conducted tours should be made at least one month before the anticipated field trip.
- Attend the annual city parades which honor various ethnic groups; for example--

  Polish Independence Day
  Mexican Independence Day
  Puerto Rican Independence Day.

- Plan a walk through a bicultural, bilingual neighborhood related to the target language being studied. Particularly interesting are trips through a supermarket, attendance at a movie in the area, and observing of signs and announcements for the various businesses.
- Visit the Museum of Science and Industry during its annual "Christmas around the World" festival, held from Thanksgiving through New Year's Day.
- Enjoy an authentic ethnic meal in any of the many wonderful Chicago ethnic restaurants. It is advisable to prearrange a fixed menu and price for the group.
- Visit the churches, temples, and houses of worship of the various ethnic groups.

. Visit the various ethnic museums:

  . Balzekas Museum of Lithuanian Culture
  . DuSable Museum of African-American History
  . Italian American Sports Hall of Fame
  . Italian Cultural Center
  . International Black Arts Museum (Evanston)
  . Ling Long Museum
  . Polish Museum of America
  . Spertus Museum of Judaica
  . Swedish American Museum
  . Ukrainian Institute of Modern Art
  . Ukrainian National Museum

. Advanced students can utilize the Foreign Visitors Reception Center at the Museum of Science and Industry for a 15-minute audio overview and slide presentation in 11 foreign languages. This must be requested in advance of visiting the museum.

STUDENT EVALUATION OF SOUNDS OF LANGUAGES

Circle one: Freshman Sophomore Junior Senior

1. Were the goals of the course as outlined fulfilled? Please comment fully.

2. What part of the course did you enjoy the most? (the least?)

3. How has the course benefited you most?

4. Would you like to pursue further language study? If so, which language? Why?

5. Have you learned about other cultures as a result of this language course? What impressed you most in the study of other cultures?

6. What special activity interested you the most? (the least?)

7. How would you change the course in order to make it a better one? (Please comment fully.)

8. Should this course continue to be offered at your school?

9. Did you learn many useful phrases in the languages studied?

10. Has the study of foreign languages helped your understanding of English? If so, how?

11. For those who have previously studied a language--do you feel you learned more or less than in a regular language course? (Please comment.)

12. At what year would it be most profitable to take a course such as Sounds of Language? Why?

Please complete this questionnaire and return it to your teacher, who will forward it to the Bureau of Foreign Languages, Department of Curriculum, Mail Run 84.

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TEACHER EVALUATION OF SOUNDS OF LANGUAGE (FIELD TEST)

Title of Program Sounds of Language (Field Test)

School _____ Unit No. _____ District ____

Students _____ have had _____ had no previous foreign language instruction.

Year (High School) of students enrolled in class: _____9 _____10

_____11 _____12 _____ mixed years.

(Elementary school: _____intermediate _____upper cycle)

Number of years of experience in teaching foreign languages:_____

(Specify foreign language(s) taught _____)

The Bureau of Foreign Languages wants and needs your reaction to this field test edition of Sounds of Language. Please make concrete suggestions concerning additions, deletions, and corrections. Comments regarding your experience in using the guide are weleome. Use reverse side or additional sheets if necessary.

It would be helpful if you would organize your suggestions in the following categories:

A. Rationale

B. Programming

C. Goals

D. Student Objectives: Sounds

E. Student Objectives: Language Skills

F. Sample Unit Adaptable to Teaching of Any Foreign Language

G. Appendix

1. Teacher Resource Information
2. Suggested Activities for Vocabulary Reinforcement
3. Suggested Special Activities To Augment the Course

4. Suggested Field Trips
5. Student Evaluation

H. Bibliography

Please complete this questionnaire and return to --

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